

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-11 ISO-00 DHA-02 ORM-02 OMB-01 EB-07

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PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 CU-02 AID-05 COME-00

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EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN, CI

SUBJECT: CRITICISM OF JUNTA POLICIES INCREASES IN CHILE

REFS: AMB'S MEMO OF JAN 23, POUCHED ARA; SANTIAGO 984

1. SUMMARY: THERE HAS BEEN A MAJOR INCREASE IN VOLUME AND SCOPE OF CRITICISM OF JUNTA POLICIES IN CHILE IN RECENT WEEKS. EX-PRESIDENT FREI'S PAMPHLET (75 SANTIAGO 8549) INTENSIFIED TREND. REOPENING OF HIGHLY CRITICAL RADIO BALMECEDA (CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC ORGAN) AND APPEARANCE OF CRITICAL SIX-PART ARTICLE ENTITLED "GLIMPSES INTO THE FUTURE" IN FEB 5 ISSUE OF WEEKLY NEWS MAGAZINE QUE PASA ARE LATEST EXAMPLES OF INCREASED PRESS AND MEDIA FREEDOM. BY FAILING TO REACT DECISIVELY, GOVERNMENT HAS PERMITTED PATTERN TO BE ESTABLISHED UNDER WHICH "CONSTRUCTIVE" CRITICISM -- I.E., CRITICISM WHICH CANNOT BE CONSTRUED AS LEFTIST IN ORIENTATION -- CAN BE UNDERTAKEN WITH RELATIVE SECURITY. WHILE MAJOR CRITICS ARE BY NO MEANS CERTAIN THEY CAN CONTINUE TO EXPRESS THEMSELVES, A CLAMP-DOWN BY

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GOVERNMENT, THOUGH POSSIBLE, APPEARS INCREASINGLY UNLIKELY

AS TIME GOES BY. END SUMMARY.

2. ALTHOUGH JUNTA HAS CUT OFF DISCUSSION OF EDUARDO FREI'S PAMPHLET CRITICIZING THE JUNTA, CHILEAN PRESS IS DAILY BECOMING MORE ASSERTIVE IN POINTING OUT THINGS IT CONSIDERS WRONG IN CHILE TODAY. ORIGINALLY SUCH CRITICISM WAS CONFINED LARGELY TO ATTACKS ON GOVERNMENT'S ECONOMIC POLICY, ON GROUND THAT "SOCIAL COST" IN TERMS OF UNEMPLOYMENT AND REDUCED PRODUCTION WAS DISPROPORTIONATELY HIGH, CONSIDERING LIMITED SUCCESS IN ANTI-INFLATION CAMPAIGN. RECENTLY, HOWEVER, LIVELY POLEMICS HAVE BEEN CARRIED ON WITH REGARD TO AGRICULTURAL POLICY, LABOR POLICY, THE GOVERNMENT'S DRASTIC SHAKEUP IN THE UNIVERSITIES, AND RESTRICTIONS ON THE PRESS AND RADIO. CRITICS HAVE OBVIOUSLY BEEN FEELING THEIR WAY, IN ATTEMPT TO ASCERTAIN HOW FAR THEY COULD GO WITHOUT PROVOKING RETALIATION FROM GOVERNMENT.

3. LATEST EXAMPLE OF SUCH COMMENT APPEARS IN FEB 5 ISSUE OF QUE PASA, A WEEKLY NOTED FOR ITS ENLIGHTENED CONSERVATISM, ITS TIES WITH BUSINESS LEADERSHIP, AND ITS NORMALLY PRO-JUNTA POSITION. THIS ISSUE FEATURES A SIX-PART ARTICLE POINTING OUT WHAT EDITORS CONSIDER DEFECTS IN IMPORTANT AREAS OF PUBLIC ACTIVITY, TOGETHER WITH CAREFULLY MODULATED SUGGESTIONS FOR RECTIFICATION. SUMMARY FOLLOWS.

A. PRESENTATION OPENS WITH AN INTRODUCTORY EDITORIAL INDUCATING CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR A REGIME WHICH MUST BE MILITARY TODAY, AND WHICH IN FUTURE WILL CONTINUE TO BE INSPIRED BY JUNTA PRINCIPLES, GUARANTEED BY WATCHFULNESS OF THE ARMED FORCES. EDITORIAL REJECTS INTERNATIONAL CRITICISMS OF CHILE BUT STRESSES NEED FOR BALANCED DISCUSSION OF NEGATIVE ELEMENTS IN PRESENT SITUATION.

B. FIRST SUBSTANTIVE SECTION, ON INTERNATIONAL POLICY, POINTS OUT THAT CHILE CANNOT IGNORE FOREIGN CRITICISM AND CANNOT AFFORD ISOLATION. ATTACKS TENDENCY TO BLAME ALL CHILE'S ILLS ON "INTERNATIONAL MARXIST CAMPAIGN," ESTIMATING THAT NO MORE THAN HALF OF ATTACKS ON CHILE COME FROM THIS SOURCE. ASSERTS HUMAN RIGHTS POLICIES BROADLY DEFINED, AND RELATIONS WITH CHURCH, MUST BE IMPROVED TO REESTABLISH CHILE'S INTERNATIONAL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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STATUS, AND CALLS FOR MORE PROFESSIONAL REPRESENTATIVES (I.E., NOT GENERALS) IN CHILEAN EMBASSIES ABROAD.

C. SECOND SECTION, DEALING WITH ECONOMIC POLICY, NOTES THAT GOVERNMENT HAS NOT SUCCEEDED IN CONVINCING PUBLIC OPINION THAT ITS ECONOMIC MEASURES ARE DESIGNED TO BENEFIT LARGE MAJORITY OF THE PEOPLE, AND CALLS FOR ALLOCATION OF GREATER RESOURCES FOR SOCIAL PURPOSES SUCH AS IMPROVEMENT OF HEALTH

AND RETIREMENT SYSTEMS, UNIVERSITY FINANCING, PUBLIC WORKS AND EMPLOYMENT, AND STIMULATION OF NEW BUSINESS ACTIVITIES -- EVEN IF LOW COPPER PRICES CONTINUE TO DEPRESS GOVERNMENT FINANCES. ASKS GOC NOT TO FEAR HETERODOX POLICIES IF THEY WILL END ECONOMIC DEPRESSION.

D. THIRD SECTION OF ARTICLE DEPICTS HARMFUL RESULTS OF GOVERNMENT'S ATTEMPTS TO "DE-POLITICIZE" THE UNIVERSITIES, NOTING THAT "MARXIST PENETRATION" HAS BEEN EXAGGERATED AND THAT HEAVY-HANDED GOVERNMENT ACTION THREATENS TO WIPE OUT CREATIVITY AND ACADEMIC COMPETENCE. LOOKS TO UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY ITSELF TO PARTICIPATE FULLY IN RESTORING PROPER UNIVERSITY FUNCTIONS.

E. FOURTH SECTION, DEALING WITH PRESS FREEDOM, NOTES THAT STATE OF SIEGE DOES NOT AUTHORIZE CURBS ON FREE EXPRESSION; CRITICIZES VARIOUS METHODS OF CENSORSHIP AND DENIAL OF INFORMATION HITHERTO PRACTICED; URGES THAT RECENT RESTRICTIVE PRESS LAW BE RESCINDED SINCE IT VIOLATES 1925 CONSTITUTION; ASKS FOR A SINGLE AUTHORITATIVE VOICE TO SERVE AS A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN; AND SUGGESTS THAT ORGANS OF LIMITED CIRCULATION SUCH AS UNIVERSITY PUBLICATIONS BE GIVEN THE BROADEST FREEDOM.

F. FIFTH SECTION, "THE CHURCH AND HUMAN RIGHTS," RECOGNIZES NEED TO COMBAT TERRORISM BUT POINTS OUT RISKS CREATED BY INADEQUATELY CONTROLLED INTERNAL SECURITY FORCES "CAPABLE OF PREVAILING OVER THE NORMAL AUTHORITIES OR PROVOKING DIFFICULTIES WHICH COULD DAMAAGE THEIR PRESTIGE AND EVEN THEIR CONTINUANCE IN POWER." NOTES NEED FOR MECHANISMS WHICH CAN PUNISH INJUSTICES, PROVIDE REPARATION AND MAINTAIN TOP-LEVEL GOVERNMENT POWER TO CONTROL ABUSES. IT IS NOT ENOUGH, AUTHOR CONTINUES, TO POINT OUT THAT WORSE TYRANNIES EXIST IN OTHER COUNTRIES. WHILE JNTA IS WORKING TO IMPROVE INTERNAL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SECURITY SYSTEM THROUGH RECENT PROTECTIVE DECRE (SANTIAGO 756) AND OTHER MEASURES, WHAT HAS BEEN DONE SO FAR IS INSUFFICIENT. WHAT ARE NEEDED NOW ARE MEASURES TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN CRIMINAL SUSPECTS ON ONE HAND, AND THEIR FAMILIES AND MERE WITNESSES OR INFORMANTS ON THE OTHER. FURTHER, GOVERNMENT MUST RESTRICT THE ACTIONS OF VARIOUS INTERNAL SECURITY AGENCIES TO THEIR OWN FIELDS; CARRY OUT, THROUGH A CHILEAN NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION, A THOROUGH REVIEW OF THE CURRENT INTERNAL SECURITY INVESTIGATION SYSTEM; AND ACT DRASTICALLY, WITH SUITABLE PUBLICITY, AGAINST ABUSES IN THE SYSTEM. IT IS INCREDIBLE, ARTICLE POINTS OUT, THAT NOTHING HAS EVER COME OF THE INVESTIGATION ANNOUNCED IN THE CASE OF THE 119 CHILEANS SAID BY FOREIGN PRESS ORGANS TO HAVE DISAPPEARED OR DIED. FINALLY, THE ARTICLE REQUESTS A PROGRESSIVE RETURN TO NORMAL JUDICIAL PRACTICES AND THE TERMINATION OF

THE POST-ALLENDE EMERGENCY PERIOD, SO THAT THE COUNTRY CAN
MOVE TOWARD A MORE NORMAL LEGAL SITUATION.

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-11 ISO-00 DHA-02 ORM-02 OMB-01 EB-07 BIB-01

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G. FINALLY, IN A SECTION ENTITLED "INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT,"
A SET OF GOALS ARE LAID OUT. FIRST, TO IMPROVE CONDITIONS OF
LIFE FOR LOWEST INCOME GROUPS IN COUNTRY; SECOND, TO ESTABLISH
THE PROPER PERMANENT, SUPERVISORY ROLE OF THE ARMED FORCES
IN THE STATE; THIRD, TO ESTABLISH UNDER THEIR TUTELAGE A
PREDOMINANTLY CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT, CREATING A TYPE OF CIVILIAN
PRIME MINISTER HOLDING OFFICE AT THE PLEASURE OF THE
PRESIDENT; FOURTH, TO REVIVE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL GROUPS
INCLUDING NON-MARXIST POLITICAL PARTIES, PERMITTING THE
RESUMPTION OF DECISION MAKING BY VOTING WITHIN THESE
ORGANISMS; FIFTH, TO REVIVE THE LEGISLATIVE FUNCTION OVER
TIME, AND TO REFURBISH THE BUREAUCRACY; AND FINALLY, TO
APPLY INDEPENDENT, EXTERNAL CONTROLS TO THE DOMESTIC SECURITY
FORCES (READ DINA).

4. WHILE ALL THE FOREGOING IS ENVISAGED WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK
OF A CONTINUING AUTHORITARIAN GOVERNMENT, IT

REPRESENTS A CAUTIOUS BUT UNMISTAKABLE ADVOCACY OF PROGRESSIVE
CHANGE. IN CONTRAST TO EX-PRESIDENT FREI, WHO STRONGLY
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ATTACKED JUNTA'S SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT BUT WAS VAGUE ON
ALTERNATIVES, QUE PASA SEEKS TO WORK WITHIN THE SYSTEM TO
IMPROVE IT.

5. AMBASSADOR DINED WITH HERNAN CUBILLOS, PUBLISHER OF QUE
PASA, FEB 5. CUBILLOS STATED THAT EDITORIAL BOARD HAD REACHED
DECISION TO PUBLISH ITS CRITIQUE WITH GREAT DIFFICULTY.
EARLIER CRITICAL ARTICLES ON INDIVIDUAL SUBJECTS HAD RESULTED
IN A VISIT TO THE MAGAZINE FROM A DINA REPRESENTATIVE, WHO
HAD SUGGESTED RESTRAINT WOULD BE DESIRABLE. QUE PASA'S RESPONSE
WAS THAT IF GOVERNMENT ATTEMPTED TO CENSOR ITS OUTPUT,
MAGAZINE WOULD IMMEDIATELY SUSPEND PUBLICATION. CUBILLOS THOUGHT
THERE WOULD BE NO SERIOUS REPERCUSSIONS AS RESULT OF PRESENT
ARTICLE -- BUT HE WAS NOT SURE.

6. SO FAR, QUE PASA ARTICLE HAS BEEN LARGELY IGNORED, NO
DOUBT IN PART BECAUSE IT APPEARED AT BEGINNING OF FEBRUARY,
VACATION MONTH. NEVERTHELESS, WE BELIEVE THAT IT WILL
STIMULATE FURTHER CRITICISM OF JUNTA'S SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT,
AND SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS FOR CHANGE, IN PERIOD AHEAD. IT
WILL BE INTERESTING TO OBSERVE REACTIONS OF CHRISTIAN
DEMOCRATS AND EXILED CHILEAN LEFTIST COMMUNITY TO QUE PASA
PROPOSALS.

7. ONE RATHER STRIKING ELEMENT OF ARTICLE IS ITS INVOCATION
OF 1925 CONSTITUTION AS INVALIDATING JUNTA'S PRESS CENSORSHIP
LAW. JUNTA HAS TAKEN POSITION THAT SOME PROVISIONS OF 1925
CONSTITUTION ARE STILL OPERATIVE, SOME NOT -- AS JUNTA ITSELF
DECIDES. TO THE EXTENT THAT SIGNIFICANT CHILEAN OPINION
CAN SUGGEST THAT 1925 CONSTITUTION IS THE BENCH MARK AGAINST
WHICH TO JUDGE CHILEAN LEGISLATION, BROADER ATTACKS ON
LEGITIMACY OF JUNTA DECREE LAWS AND EVEN JUNTA ITSELF COULD
LOGICALLY BE EXPECTED IN DUE COURSE.

8. ADDITIONAL POINT OF SPECIFIC INTEREST IS SUGGESTION THAT
MILITARY, THOUGH RETAINING ULTIMATE CONTROL, BEGIN TO STEP
INTO BACKGROUND BY TURNING OVER OPERATIONAL AUTHORITY
TO PRIME MINISTER AND A PREDOMINANTLY CIVIL GOVERNMENT.
WE SEE NO INDICATION THAT A "TURKISH SOLUTION" ALONG THESE
LINES IS AN IMMEDIATE POSSIBILITY. NEVERTHELESS, QUE PASA
IS HERE PICKING UP A BROADLY HELD VIEW THAT SOONER OR LATER
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THE MILITARY WILL HAVE TO RETURN TO THE BARRACKS, EITHER

BECAUSE THEY CANNOT COPE WITH CHILE'S POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC PROBLEMS, OR BECAUSE THEY WISH TO PRESERVE THE MILITARY'S UNIQUE, ABOVE-THE-BATTLE STATUS BY LETTING SOME ONE ELSE DO SO AND RESERVING THEIR OWN DIRECT INTERVENTION FOR MAJOR EMERGENCIES.

9. WE WILL CONTINUE TO MONITOR CLOSELY TRENDS IN THE AREA OF FREEDOM OF PRESS AND MEDIA.
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